

Message Text

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REF: CAIRO 13464

SUMMARY. PAPERS REPORT CABINET MET FOR 3 1/2 HOURS TO
CONSIDER IMPLEMENTATION OF REFERENDUM BUT NO DETAILS
GIVEN. TWENTY-TWO MORE LEFTISTS ARRESTED FOR ILLEGAL
DISTRIBUTION OF LEAFLETS. PAPERS SAY SADAT WILL MEET
WITH (REPORTEDLY CRITICAL) ALEXANDRIA UNIVERSITY FACULTY
MAY 28. PRESS PLAY ON COURT DECISION TO BAN AL AHALI
MAKES PUBLIC CRITICISM OF GUMRUK BY-ELECTION AND
REFERENDUM, WHILE SUGGESTING LEFT ENJOYING SOME SUCCESS
IN FORGING UNITED FRONT SINCE PAPER CONTAINED INTERVIEW
WITH WAFD LEADER AND ARTICLE BY PROMINENT INDEPENDENT MP.
END SUMMARY.

1. CABINET MEETING. CABINET MET FOR THREE AND ONE-HALF
HOURS MAY 24 TO CONSIDER IMPLEMENTATION OF REFERENDUM.
FOLLOWING MEETING, MININFO AL SAWI TOLD PRESS PRIME
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MINISTER EMPHASIZED THAT REFERENDUM WAS A DECISION TAKEN
BY EGYPTIAN PEOPLE, HIGHEST AUTHORITY IN COUNTRY AND
SOURCE OF ALL POWER. SALEM STRESSED NEED TO "CLEAR
ATMOSPHERE" OF THOSE CASTING DOUBT, DISSEMINATING
DESPAIR, GRUDGES AND HATRED. AL SAWI SAID PRIME MINISTER
ADVOCATED GREATER COORDINATION BETWEEN CENTER PARTY AND
PARLIAMENT, NOTING THAT FOR FIRST TIME PARLIAMENTARY

UNDER SECRETARIES WILL BE APPOINTED TO EACH MINISTRY. ACCORDING AL SAWI, THEY WILL BE EXPECTED TO COORDINATE POLICY AND RELIEVE MINISTERS OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANSWERING PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRIES.

2. ALEXANDRIA UNIVERSITY. PRESS REPORTS PRESIDENT SADAT IS SCHEDULED TO MEET WITH ALEXANDRIA UNIVERSITY BOARD AND FACULTY IN CAIRO ON MAY 28. (NOTE: THERE ARE PERSISTENT RUMORS--SEE BELOW--THAT ALEXANDRIA UNIVERSITY FACULTY PROTESTED REFERENDUM. SADAT'S MEETING WITH ACADEMIC CRITICS, FOLLOWING LECTURE TO JOURNALISTS, IS STRONGLY REMINISCENT OF PRESIDENT'S BEHAVIOR AFTER 1977 PRICE RIOTS REFERENDUM.)

3. ARRESTS. PRESS REPORTS TWENTY-TWO ADDITIONAL LEFTISTS ARRESTED IN KAMSHIS (MENOUFIA GOVERNORATE) JUNE 24, IN ADDITION TO FOUR ORIGINALLY DETAINED. GROUP, REPORTEDLY, WAS DISTRIBUTING LEFT PARTY MANIFESTO. INTERESTINGLY, HIGHER MILITARY COURT (HEARING STILL ANOTHER COMMUNIST CASE) FELT CALLED UPON TO RECORD, AT BEGINNING MAY 24 PROCEEDINGS, THAT MILITARY PROSECUTOR HAS NOT RECEIVED ANY COMPLAINTS THUS FAR AGAINST OFFICIAL LEFT PARTY (DENIAL APPARENTLY CONTRADICTS BRIG. GEN. SHEBAN'S ALLEGATION - CAIRO 13464).

4. AL AHALI. CAIRO COURT OF FIRST INSTANCE MAY 24
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CONFIRMED BAN ON 17TH EDITION OF LEFTIST WEEKLY AL AHALI. IN REPORTING PROCEEDINGS, NATIONAL PAPERS AIRED MANY OF ALLEGATIONS CONTAINED IN SUPPRESSED PUBLICATION. PUBLIC NOW KNOWS PAPER QUESTIONED FAIRNESS OF GUMRUK BY-ELECTION AND LEGALITY OF REFERENDUM. FURTHER, IT NOW PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE THAT BAR ASSOCIATION CONSIDERED PETITION OPPOSING REFERENDUM (ALTHOUGH THIS REPORTEDLY NOT FORMALLY ENDORSED BY LAWYERS). ADDITIONALLY, PRESS REFERRED TO ALEXANDRIA UNIVERSITY FACULTY HAVING PROTESTED REFERENDUM FOR RESTRICTING FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY. AL AHALI, REPORTEDLY, ALSO CONTAINED INTERVIEW WITH WAFDIST LEADER FOUAD SARAGEDDIN (INDICATING LEFT GOAL OF SEEKING BROAD FRONT BEARING SOME SUCCESS) AS WELL AS ARTICLE BY INDEPENDENT MP MUMTAZ NASSAR (WHO IS ATTEMPTING FORM FIFTH POLITICAL PARTY). COURT HELD LATTER TWO ARTICLES DID NOT COUNTERVENE LAW BUT FOUND CRITICISM ALEXANDRIA BY-ELECTION AND REFERENDUM COUNTERVENED ARTICLE 102 OF PENAL CODE. MATTHEWS

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